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June 6, 1947

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The COMMONWEAL

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Please Veto, Mr. President

AS THESE lines are written one cannot know for certain what the Senate-House conferees will produce in the form of a labor bill. But every indication points to their producing a thoroughly bad and unjust piece of legislation. We therefore strongly urge the President not only to veto it but to accompany his veto with a message which will make clear the reasons for his action and will thus leave open a reasonable hope for the emergence of a sound reform in labor legislation rather than legislation calculated principally to please heavy contributors to Republican campaign funds.

Plans and Operations

AS AN IDEA, the concept of a European federation has been in and out of style for at least a thousand years. It is doubtful, however, that it has ever looked so attractive to so many people as it has during the past two weeks. At the moment, the notion of a United States of Europe

is moving toward a level of popularity which may eventually match that brief, giddy episode in the history of the United Nations: the inauguration ceremonies of San Francisco. That, at least, is the current state of affairs in the United States; official and public enthusiasm for the idea of a united Europe may be warming up more slowly in other sections of the world.

The personality most responsible for this condition of rare optimism and excitement is, of course, Winston Churchill. Some two weeks ago, in a speech delivered at the Albert Hall in London, Mr. Churchill issued a cry for a unified Europe that has echoed at least part way round the world. Even before Mr. Churchill spoke, the idea was in the air. Mr. Foster Dulles, one of Secretary Marshall's advisers at the Moscow Conference, had already pointed out the life-and-death necessity for an economically unified Europe. At the conclusion of the Moscow Conference, several American newspaper correspondents who had attended that inconclusive meeting reported that Secretary Marshall and his assistants were groping toward a plan for a federated, self-supporting Europe. And even earlier than either of these indications there had been a sign from Europe itself: a number of small nations—The Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg—announced the formation of a customs union. The idea and the inclination toward it were obviously there. Mr. Churchill's service consisted in giving the notion a roaring rhetorical send-off.

At any one time in history, only a few men are capable of infusing an idea with the emotional blood that is so necessary if the idea is to catch on. Mr. Churchill is a man of that type. In this case, he has taken a well-worn idea and made it sound modish and new. He has brought the people up. The job from now on is to keep them there, and all the eloquence in the world, by itself, will not accomplish that. The next step is a plan. If plans and action are not forthcoming immediately, then the notion of a United States of Europe will drop back, of its own weight, into the already overburdened file of splendid unused ideas, and all the royal phrases in Mr. Churchill's kit will not be sufficient to raise it again. One need not be a Churchill in order to discover the proper and necessary source of effective plans and action. From now on, it is up to the people and government of the United States.

There are several things that the United States can do without delay. The State Department is said to be already on the move; Secretary Marshall is reported to have called for an immediate survey of the European economic potential as it exists today. Good. The first thing to learn is what we will have to work with. How rich is Europe—not how rich is a predicated, supposed, future Europe, but how rich is the Europe that is still unlocked and available for integration.

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Find the fertile spots and the barren spots and then plot the channels between them. Locate the knots—ideological and physical that must be undone in order to permit a loosened, more even economic spread. Strengthen, economically, the going concerns—The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg customs union, for example. Make participation in a European federation one of the conditions for United States money aid that is granted via the Truman Doctrine.

This is not an over-night business, of course. But if this country moves into action now, and, while doing so, keeps the people of Europe informed concerning our mutual destination, then the idea of a federated Europe will not fade off into the limbo of fine but unattained objects. It is the only workable way to turn the Truman Doctrine from negative to positive, to plant fresh, resilient stays beneath the sagging European structure, and—for the special edification of the American taxpayer—to make sure that American economic aid to Europe will lose its present disturbing resemblance to the motions of a hopeless bucket brigade.

Life and Liberty

PRINCIPALS connected with the lynching case at Greenville, S. C., present the sharpest contrast. Governor Thurmond's vigorous actions, the round-up of all the suspects in four days, the appointment of the state's most successful prosecutor—even the fact of the trial itself—seemed an indication of the arousing of the southern conscience. Yet these good signs and the exemplary conduct of Judge Martin make the trial itself of the thirty local white taxi-drivers for the lynching of Willie Earle all the more heinous.

Consider the strategy of Harvard-trained defense attorney Wofford. The defense did not call a single witness. It did not deny that the defendants were guilty of the crime. Statements admitting their guilt were presented for twenty-six of the men charged with Earle's mutilation and murder. The main contention of the defense was that these statements were obtained by the police and the FBI on the basis that a jury would never convict them in South Carolina. The defense charged that the statements had therefore been deceitfully obtained and ended with a rousing plea that the jury render a verdict that would be a direct answer to "meddling from the North." No attempt to deny the crime; it was repeatedly admitted. Yet the local jury acquitted each and all. United States Attorney General Tom Clark must see through his announced plan for a federal investigation!

Meanwhile, in North Carolina only a desperate break from his captors saved another Negro from a similar fate. Here again a southern governor came out for the protections of the law and despatched state police to do what they could. At

present, the intended victim, having surrendered to custody of the FBI, is heavily guarded in the state capital. And in Virginia an aged Negro has just been set upon, robbed and slain at his home by three white bandits who got clean away.

It is hardly "meddling" to insist on basic human rights for every man and woman in every locality of this country. A threat to the life and liberty of any American is a matter of national concern. When the members of a group who constitute nearly one-tenth of the nation are deprived of the protection of the law—and this deprivation rests precisely on the element of race or color—a national challenge is involved.

Despite FBI capture of a suspect in the North Carolina case, his confession, and the implication of seven others, J. Edgar Hoover had to release the man to the Northampton County authorities. No federal statute had been violated. Penalties under North Carolina law are severe: a life sentence is mandatory for kidnaping. Such a penalty tends to decrease the likelihood of conviction in this state, where conditions vary widely county by county. National legislation has long been needed. Southern filibustering has thus far blocked anti-lynch bills in Congress. Prospects for pending legislation are not good.

Since fierce local and regional pride often obscures decent human instincts, it would be far better if the restoration of law and order in these areas be inspired from within. The public pronouncements of the Carolina governors, the attitude of the Greenville judge and certain other South Carolina court officials show what time and education can accomplish. But can we wait for the slow turn of the wheels of education and maturity when human sensibilities are outraged, human rights trampled and human lives at stake?

Migratory Farm Labor

NOW THAT the clouds of the war are somewhat dispersed and we are again able to examine the American landscape with reasonable concentration and with our hearts disengaged from foreign things and foreign places, we become aware that the same human problems remain for solution as before we became involved in conflict. During the war years we were aware that the hospitality extended to certain imported workers on our railroads left something to be desired, although the treatment accorded similar workers of foreign origin on our farms was reasonably good. Now once again the alarm signals are out concerning migratory workers on American farms who are themselves citizens or residents of the United States. This category of labor possesses none of the safeguards which have been won by other American workers. It is specifically left out of minimum wage and social security and old age pension legislation—partly because of the insistence that it should be left out

by the large-scale farmers who are its employers. These same growers are now seeking to put migrant farm labor into an even more intolerable position by denying to the Department of Agriculture, under the jurisdiction of which this type of labor falls, any right to control the movements of either workers or employers, to fix wages, working conditions, "or the like." At the same time the growers are all in favor of federal funds for the construction of work camps, which would remain under the growers' control. If the legislation the farmers are at present advocating were to pass, we should soon again be faced with a situation very close to peonage among the migratory farm workers. Since most of these workers have no other salable skills and since many of them have little knowledge of English, it is possible, with the help of suitable laws, to keep them indefinitely in a condition disgraceful to our nation, unless there is sufficient pressure and protest. Recently a special Federal inter-agency committee on migrant labor, under the chairmanship of a Marine Corps general, has handed in the results of a year's investigation. These findings have been made public by the Department of Labor and depict a situation in which standards are incredibly lower than for the rest of the population. In his foreword Major General Erskine minces no words. He says that migrant workers have been stripped "of so many normal and human rights that it is almost unbelievable." When we find such things coming from an officer of a military body scarcely noted for tenderheartedness, we are forced to conclude that the situation deserves airing and an honest effort at a remedy.

Abraham Cahan and Forward

THE New York newspaper, the Jewish Daily *Forward* is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary and THE COMMONWEAL congratulates *Forward* and its editor Abraham Cahan. We are making no conventional gesture and certainly paying no automatic tribute to longevity; there are many institutions which have lasted five times fifty years which we do not like; we congratulate *Forward* because at a specific period in the life of our country this newspaper kept a great number of our fellow citizens from feeling entirely lost, totally exploited, irremediably unhappy.

In the eighteen eighties and nineties, the Jewish immigrants came here by the thousands from Eastern Europe to escape persecution. They lived in the lower East Side of the city; they spoke Yiddish; they entered at once into a furious struggle to survive in a city alien to them and unhelpful. They were protected from massacre simply because no one in America wanted to massacre them; they were not protected from loneliness or exploitation because the social and

economic system prevailing in America at the time protected no minorities from loneliness and exploited them all in turn. It was the land of limitless opportunity, and it was savagely indifferent to those unable to grasp that opportunity.

From the start it had been that way and wave after wave of immigrants, from the first colonists, to the Irish, the Germans, the Italians, had been forced to fight under this cold sky of freedom in order to reach some manner of security, some sense of participation, some achievement of feeling that they were at home.

The sacrifices demanded of all of them were immense; it was within their own group that each had to find the strength to continue. The Jewish people of New York's East Side found the necessary courage, intelligence, idealism quite naturally among their own people. In that bitter world which Abraham Cahan so well described in his "Rise of David Levinsky" were men like Cahan himself and the founders of *Forward* and, later, men like David Dubinsky, men who stayed with their people and gave them pride and hope. They built the labor unions to protect the workers but also to protect the employers who were caught, themselves, in the vicious system of exploitation and cheap sweatshop labor. They taught their people English; they made it possible for their people to become our people, the American people.

Forward ran serialized English lessons, taught American history; the paper knew that its readers were here to stay; it helped them understand the country in which they were to become citizens; but it did not want them to feel that they had come out of nowhere, out of a prideless past, out of no history, bringing with them nothing but their poverty, their humiliation, their misery and their labor. So that while *Forward* taught them about America it taught them also—speaking to them in Yiddish, the gentle language they knew and loved—that their race had produced poetry, history and a civilization. *Forward* also serialized the great European masters, the Germans and the Russians (long before English-speaking Americans were reading them). So that these people, still exiles in their new home, found this comfort, this great and stimulating intellectual and spiritual assistance, in a newspaper which they themselves had founded and supported with their contributions in the difficult days.

Later they were to see it reach a daily circulation of 225,000. Today its circulation has dropped to 98,500. But that is the result of its success: Throughout the years it led its readers into America; now they are at home in America. But it is not recently that the editor of *Forward* has been at home in America; he was a great American from the day he landed in New York in 1882. His readers also were always Americans. Because they came here with that desire.

In the Ruins of New York

(From "*Figures for an Apocalypse*")

The moon is paler than an actress.
We have seen her mourning in the brown ivy
Of the dendric bridges—
In the brown, broken ivy
That loves but a span of air,
The moon is paler than an actress, and she weeps for
you, New York,
Seeking to see you through the tattered bridges,
Leaning down to catch the sham brass
Of your sophisticated voice:
Whose songs are heard no more.

Oh how quiet it is after the black night
When flames out of the cloud burned down your cariated
teeth,
And when those lightnings
Lancing the black boils of Harlem and the Bronx,
Spilled the remaining prisoners,
(The tens and twenties of the living)
Into the trees of Jersey,
To the green farms, to find their liberty.

How are they down, how have they fallen down
Those great strong towers of ice and steel?
And melted by what terror and what miracle?
What fires and lights tore down,
With the white anger of their sudden accusation,
Those towers of silver and of steel?

You whose streets grew up on trellises
With roots in Bowling Green and tap-roots in the
Upper Bay:
How are you stripped, now, to your skeleton?
What has become of your live and dead flesh?
Where is the shimmer of your bawdy leaves?

Oh, where your children on the evening of your final
Sunday
Gunned after one another in the shadows of the Para-
mount,
The ashes of the leveled towers still curl with tufts
of smoke
And veil your obsequies in their incinerating haze,
And write, in embers, this your epitaph:

"This was the city
That dressed herself in paper money.
She lived four hundred years
With nickels running through her veins.
She loved the waters of the seven purple seas,
And burned on her own green harbor
Higher and whiter than every any Tyre.
She was as callous as a taxi.
Her high-heeled eyes were sometimes blue as gin,

And she nailed them, all the days of her life,
Through the hearts of her five million poor.
And now she has died in the terrors of a sudden con-
templation
—Drowned in the waters of her own, her poisoned well."

Can we console you, stars,
For the so long survival of such wickedness?
Tomorrow and the day after
Grasses and flowers will grow
Upon the bosom of Manhattan.
And soon the branches of the hickory and sycamore
Will wave where all those dirty windows were—
Ivy and the wild-grape vine
Will tear those old walls down,
Burying the brownstone fronts in freshness and fragrant
flowers,
And the wild-rose and the crab-apple tree
Will bloom in all those silent mid-town dells.

There shall be doves' nests, and hives of bees
In the cliffs of the ancient apartments,
And birds shall sing in the sunny hawthorns, where was
once Park Avenue.
And where Grand Central was shall be a little hill
Clustered with sweet, dark pine.

Will there be some farmer, think you,
Clearing a place in the woods,
Planting an acre of bannered corn
On the heights above Harlem Forest?
Will hunters come explore
The virgin glades of Broadway for the lynx and deer?
Or will some hermit, hiding in the birches, build himself
a cell
With the stones of the City Hall,
When all the caved-in subways turn to streams
And creeks of fish,
Flowing in sun and silence to the reedy Battery?

But now the moon is paler than a statue.
She reaches out and hangs her lamp
In the iron trees of this destroyed Hesperides.
And by that light, under the caves that once were banks
and theaters,
The hairy ones come out and play—
And we believe we hear the singing of the manticores
Echo along the rocks of Wall and Pine:

And we are frozen in fear, and muter than the upside
down stars
That limp in the lame waters,
Muter than the mother-moon, who, white as death,
Flies and escapes across the wastes of Jersey.

THOMAS MERTON.

The Arts in Ireland

Vivian Mercier

THOSE OF US who remained in Dublin throughout the war years had an unhappy feeling that we were a race of pigmies. If people from outside thought the arts were dead in Ireland, we ourselves were to blame, for we repeatedly told them so. Our attitude was not that "flippant, futile derision" which Shaw thought "peculiar to Dublin," but a serious, purposeful pessimism. Hemmed in by active censors and indifferent Philistines, we began to feel that we had nothing to offer which was worth defending. Like our ancestors at the time of the Danish invasions, we retired into round towers—which this time had walls of ivory.

Then the war ended, the ladders were let down from the round tower windows, and the erstwhile prisoners scattered at a run. The order of dispersal was, first the cosmopolitan Europeans and Americans whom the war had caught in Ireland, then the native Irish. The British, painters and others, who came to Dublin just before the war to avoid conscription are now among the few survivors of that motley group one used to meet at parties round about Baggot Street—Dublin's war-time equivalent of Greenwich Village. Even these English have left the ivory tower to some extent, discarded stacks of non-representational paintings, and moved in upon the Irish countryside—which they paint better than the Irish do.

The Irish themselves left home in this order: actors first; then directors and scene designers; then writers, singers, vaudeville comedians, painters, in one heterogeneous mass. No doubt even the composers and sculptors will be on the move soon, if anybody finds out that there are such things in Ireland.

London, as usual, has swallowed up most Irish talent—I admit that genius, as opposed to mere talent, is in short supply in Ireland at present, but this is true of every country. Still, several of my talented friends have filtered through to New York since I arrived in the United States at the end of June last year. I think the first to arrive was Maura Laverty—a potential best-selling authoress in the opinion of more than one American publisher.

Then came Eithne Dunne, to play the lead in Synge's "Playboy of the Western World," opposite Burgess Meredith. Hard on her heels followed the Dublin Gate Theatre's brilliant director, Hilton Edwards, to discuss various possibilities for his company over here. Other recent im-

portations include an Irish tenor, Christopher Lynch; an Irish baritone, Michael O'Higgins; and a galleryful of pictures for the Modern Irish Painting exhibition at the Associated American Artists' Gallery.

So far, so good. Americans can make up their own minds about what they have already seen and heard—or will see and hear in the near future—including the numerous books by Irish authors which are appearing in current American lists. I want rather to make COMMONWEAL readers aware of works and artists that are less readily available, yet of special interest to those of more than average intelligence and sensibility, particularly if they happen to be Catholics.

First, poetry. There are now living in Ireland two poets, one lyric and one dramatic, either of whom is worthy, in his chosen field, of comparison with Yeats himself. Macmillan has just published in England the first collected volume of Patrick Kavanagh's poetry, "A Soul for Sale," which is due to appear over here shortly. Irishmen, whatever their feelings about the personality of the poet, are unanimous in their enthusiasm for his poetry. Kavanagh is a sort of peasant Blake, dour, earthbound, bitter, whose moments of vision are revelations of things-as-they-are. His best poetry thus appears ultra-realistic rather than visionary, and he may well be classed as an existentialist by some.

I do not believe, however, that Paddy Kavanagh's mind was ever exposed to any philosophy, with the possible exception of some condensed version of the *Summa* of Aquinas. But Maritain assures us that "Saint Thomas was an existentialist in a genuine sense," so perhaps Kavanagh, like Joyce, owes his anti-romantic view of the world to the Angelic Doctor.

Unfortunately, I have not yet received my copy of "A Soul for Sale," so I cannot quote from "The Great Hunger," part of which first appeared in the Irish Number of *Horizon* in 1942. I should like, however, to quote one of Kavanagh's short, satirical poems.

Here is the sonnet on Tom Moore's statue from a sequence of three entitled *Statue, Symbol and Poet*:

The cowardice of Ireland is in his statue,
No poet's honoured when they wreath this stone.
An old shopkeeper who has dealt in the marrow-bone
Of his neighbours looks at you.
Dim-eyed, degenerate, he is admiring his god,

The bank-manager who hears his monthly confession,
 The tedious narrative of a mediocrity's passion,
 The shallow, safe sins that never become a flood
 To sweep themselves away. From under
 His coat lapels the vermin creep, as Joyce
 Noted in passing on his exile's way.
 O in the wreathing of this stone now I wonder
 If there is not somehow the worship of the lice
 That crawl upon the seven-deadened clay.*

In those fourteen lines you have summed up Kavanagh's whole uneasy relationship with his Church and his country. I doubt if he could ever free himself of either and still remain a poet. Lately he has been writing for *The Standard*, an Irish Catholic weekly, and seems to be in a phase of reconciliation with the Church. How long this will last is anybody's guess.

If Kavanagh's struggles are carried on within the Catholic Church, Austin Clarke battles it from without; yet, while reading or watching his plays, one would swear he was the more Catholic author of the two. Clarke's upbringing was very similar to Joyce's. Born in Dublin, he was educated by the Jesuits at Belvedere College and University College, Dublin. He took a much longer time to find himself, both as a man and as a writer, than Joyce. Meanwhile he wrote a great deal of praiseworthy epic poetry. Since his final break with all the forces moulding his early life, however, he has written only lyric and dramatic poetry—besides two novels.

Clarke has now nine verse plays to his credit, all of which have been performed at least once, usually under his own direction. He has trained a group known as the Dublin Verse Speaking Society, which gives programs over the Irish radio, and he also runs a play-producing organization called the Lyric Theatre Company. Now that the Abbey Theatre has virtually abandoned poetic drama, Clarke's groups fill a very important function in Dublin's artistic life.

Space is too limited here to give readers any conception of Clarke's scope as a dramatist. Suffice it to say that his plays range in mood from farce to tragedy, and in time from Ireland's earliest Christian centuries down to the present day. All of them could be termed Miracle or Morality plays, and for their full appreciation they need audiences whose members are either practicing Catholics or persons, like myself, who have been in close touch with Catholic practice and doctrine at some time in their lives. For a fuller account of Clarke's plays, I refer readers to my article in the spring issue of *Chimera*.

Turning to prose drama, we find little to interest us. Paul Vincent Carroll's recent career has been one long slide downhill from the peak represented by "Shadow and Substance." Seán

O'Casey, Lord help us, is trying to be a dramatic poet. The most promising younger dramatist is Gerard Healy, Eithne Dunne's husband, whose "Thy Dear Father" and "The Black Stranger" both dealt with subject matter new to the Irish stage. His long struggle with tuberculosis left him too exhausted to write, but I hope he is now strong enough to get to work again.

Perhaps the most hopeful news for the Irish theatre is that Denis Johnston, author of "The Old Lady Says 'No!'" "The Moon in the Yellow River," "A Bride for the Unicorn," and other highly original plays, has at last left the British Broadcasting Company, which since 1936 has absorbed most of his energies as script-writer, war reporter and television program chief. He is going to devote himself to play-writing, and it will be very exciting to see what the only Irishman to master Expressionism brings forth after his long period of sterility.

As for the fiction writers, they have either fallen back from their best, or are trying desperately to stay where they are. Frank O'Connor's *New Yorker* stories have not been in quite his best vein, though very near it. Liam O'Flaherty's "Land" is a sad come-down after "Famine." Of his generation, only O'Faoláin shows a steady development towards greater artistry in his tales and novels. His last novel, "Come Back to Erin," about the differences between American-Irish and Irish-Irish, deserves to be more widely known both in Ireland and here.

Besides Maura Laverty's, the talents of Mary Lavin and Michael McLaverty came to light during the war years. Their difficulty is the difficulty of almost all modern novelists who do not write in a sophisticated tradition. Sooner or later, after one's first, or fifth, or fourteenth book, one has, for want of material, to stop compiling anthropological studies, and start writing novels. But how hard it is to start! This is as much McLaverty's problem as it has tended to be, say, Faulkner's.

Just a brief look at "the other arts," and I am through. Those who saw the recent exhibition of Modern Irish Painting in New York complained that it didn't look Irish. No more it did, except for Jack B. Yeats. He comes from a family that ripens late but opulently. "Influences" are beside the point. Yeats's subject matter has never ceased to be the horses, gypsies, donkeys and sea-shores of Sligo long ago, or the theaters and bars of Edwardian London. His draftsman's line has not changed either—only his palette, which has become rich and strange, reversing the development of his brother's poetic vocabulary, which grew less romantic, more austere, with the approach of old age.

In music, Moeran is the leading Irish composer, but his work bears little trace of nationality, no

*Quoted by permission of Macmillan, London.

more than does most Irish painting. In sculpture I claim one artist as truly native to the soil—Séamus Murphy, a Cork man, who began as a stone-cutter, and has written a book, "Stone Mad," about the traditions of his dying craft. In his adaptation of the Romanesque (Byzantine) tradition of Ireland's early ecclesiastical sculpture I see tremendous possibilities. The difficulty is to find Irish Catholics who will accept his version of the Virgin and Child any more willingly than they do Rouault's Christ. He cannot afford to do much large-scale work of this type except on commission, and there is danger that he will have to fall back on portrait heads of politicians and businessmen for his bread and butter. Perhaps Catholics in the United States might be more appreciative than his own countrymen. There is no question but that a great Catholic sculptor is going to waste at present—and in a devoutly Catholic country.

Ireland's current achievement in all the arts is decidedly below that of post-war Britain—to go no further. The painting of John Piper and others, the music of Benjamin Britten and Michael Tippett, the sculpture of Henry Moore, the poetry of Eliot's wartime rebirth, have no Irish parallel. But for Ireland, as for the United States, this is a period of pause, of revaluation, after half a century of productivity unrivaled in our earlier history. There, as here, one must wait, search one's soul, have faith.

London Commentary

J. L. BENVENISTI

IN A RECENT editorial of the *Saturday Evening Post*, which by a devious and complicated process can still be obtained here, the writer sought to show that the disappearance of British rule from her colonial empire might produce very different results for the native population than those popularly anticipated.

"The theory," he wrote—"during the period when the British were supposed to get out of everywhere to make room for the 'dynamic forces of democracy'—was that the disappearance of British civil servants and men in pith helmets from colonial areas would be succeeded immediately by a rush by the natives for sack suits, economic planning and the editorials of Henry Wallace."

The article then went on to show what would probably be the real effects of a British withdrawal.

On June 16, 1944, while pursuing the identical argument, I wrote the following passage in this paper:

"Many Americans . . . seem to think that, if left to themselves, even the most backward parts

of our Empire would spontaneously generate a sort of 'American way of life,' complete with Rotary Clubs, electric waffle irons and the Republican convention."

I also then proceeded to dilate on the real effects of a British withdrawal, and came to pretty much the same conclusions as the *Post*.

The two passages bear a striking similarity to each other, even down to the use of the rhetorical triad, and I feel a little melancholy that apparently the majority of the American people are only now beginning to find out what I was telling readers of this paper three years ago. Well, better late than never, but I fear that even now much well-intentioned American comment is a little uncritical. There is a tendency to swing from mere detraction to facile encomium, and not only to predicate to us a much higher degree of virtue than that of which we are possessed, but also a much higher degree of stability and strength.

In the *Post* editorial just quoted, there occurs the following:

"For our part, we expect the British to outlast this toying with the millennium and remain on the scene for some time. They are suffering mostly from a want of dollar exchange and an excess of doctrinaire muddling. Britain, with her assets of character, has fought off worse combinations."

What exactly is meant here by "remaining on the scene" and "outlasting worse combinations"? Does this mean that Britain will one day regain her influence and relative material power in the world—or even her relative standard of wealth? I can see no reason whatever for supposing it. These things belong to a phase of the world's development that is now past. The question is whether we can accommodate ourselves to circumstances and still remain in the fullest sense of the words a civilized nation—and here I am much more optimistic.

I think another American, writing in the *New Yorker*, came much nearer to the real point of the matter when he wrote that "to visit England now is like going to stay with honorable, incorruptible, highly cultivated, extremely poor relations."

I do not quite know what "highly cultivated" means in this connection, but it is certainly true to say that the British are—at least in the main—bearing their present very considerable difficulties and discomforts with dignity and patience. The great question is, will things get any worse, and what will happen if they do?

The answer to that question cannot unfortunately be given with any confidence, for it looks as though things are going to get, not only worse, but a great deal worse than they are already, since no less a thing than our whole food supply is likely soon to be in jeopardy.

The notion that Englishmen should ever as a nation go hungry in the manner in which many

continental peoples are going hungry, still seems to most people over here something like a violation of the laws of nature, for the conviction that Britain has a special contract with Providence dies hard, and no Englishman with anything resembling an income really believes that it is possible for him to starve. But the brutal logic of facts is irresistible, and none but the blindest can fail to take heed of the writing on the wall.

Before the war Britain imported about half her food—rather more than half, if you take into account imported feeding stuffs and the fact that a lot of the cattle which were fattened and killed in Britain were aliens by birth. These two totals of imported and home produced food gave us a diet that was barely adequate for our needs—it left a perceptible pauper fringe on the threshold of starvation—and the postwar picture as far as the home produced food is concerned, is substantially less favorable. Compared with pre-war, our acreage of staple crops has been somewhat expanded, but the appalling state of the livestock position is clearly revealed in the following figures which compare the state of affairs in 1946 with that of 1939:

*Cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry population of
England and Wales (in thousands)*

	1939	1946
Cattle	6,777	7,267
Sheep and lambs.....	17,986	12,819
Pigs	3,515	1,476
Poultry	56,426	39,845

Bad as it was last year, our position has been further worsened by the winter's weather, which has caused us to lose millions of sheep and lambs through floods and snow. For England and Wales the figures are 1,140,000 sheep lost and approximately 2 million lambs, and it is estimated that the overall long term losses for Great Britain as a whole, i.e. Scotland, England and Wales, exceed 4 million. This means that when the American loan runs out, which it most certainly will do some time in 1948, we shall, so far from being nearer to self-sufficiency in food, be further away from it than ever before, and consequently be even more in need of that foreign exchange of which we may find ourselves suddenly and catastrophically short. If no special provision is made to supply the deficiency, the thing I have spoken of will happen, and we shall, to put the matter in all its bald brutality, be reduced to starvation rations.

I am, however, not going to pretend that our only malady is a physical one, or rather that our physical malady results entirely from adverse circumstances, though as to ninety-five percent this is true. We are also going through a moral crisis, and one which, in view of its considerable material effects, we cannot in our present straits afford to leave unresolved.

This moral crisis is at the moment emerging very perceptibly in one department, and that perhaps the most critical of all—coal; and I am in writing thus not alluding to the introduction of the five-day week, though from the way some people talk about it, it might well be thought that this is what I have in mind. It is, of course, natural for some uneasiness to be felt because the miners have insisted on introducing the five-day week at this most precarious moment in our fortunes. But the new step is by no means the piece of irresponsible insanity for which at first glance one might take it.

Briefly the position is this. Before the war it was comparatively rare for the miners to work a full week because of the insufficiency of demand. The result was that if they were wanted they generally turned up in adequate numbers. Today the demand is continual, but the miners, who have now a much higher average age, can no longer make the grade, and the result is a very high rate of absenteeism—roughly 16 percent.

Now, in mining irregular attendance has a very lowering effect on output. Behind every man at the coal face there are a number of others engaged on haulage and similar tasks, so that the absence of a comparatively small number of men may seriously cripple the human machine. The miners say that with a five-day week absenteeism will decline and the output per shift will increase, and they may quite well be right. Even so, however, it is reckoned that if we are to attain our indispensable coal target of 220 million tons, without which there is no hope whatever of keeping all the wheels of industry turning and so earning a few extra dollars by exports, the output per shift must increase from 1.06 tons to 1.31 tons. That, at least, is the estimate if the numbers employed in the industry increase at about the rate which the government planners assume.

This seems a very steep rise, especially since the average output for the past twelve years has never exceeded 1.18 tons. It is unlikely that we shall attain it (and Heaven help us if we fail!) unless every ounce not only of physical energy but of brains and organizing genius is brought to bear on the problem, and every consideration short of bare justice disregarded which tends to damp the effort down.

Of course, the human factor is not the only one that enters here. Production is badly slowed down by worn out machinery, by the antiquated organization of the mines, and by an insufficiency of new coal faces. But for all that, the human factor is important, and there seems, to put it mildly, to be room for doubt as to whether it is being handled in the right way, and whether there is here that determined adaptation of means to ends for which the situation calls.

Take this factor of absenteeism, for instance.

No doubt a large part of it is due, as the miners claim, to the aging and tiredness of the labor force, to accidents, and so on. But a part of it is most certainly due to something very different. It is due to the operation of income tax.

One of the most extraordinary facts in the present situation is that there has been no official inquiry as yet (I have rung up our Minister of Labor to confirm this) examining the effects on output of the present appalling rate of tax—45 percent at a comparatively low level of income. Yet everybody knows that the tax has an effect of some kind, for despite the absence of official statistics, there are too many instances quoted, and even quoted in the House of Commons, of men who work till their earnings reach the point at which the 45 percent tax begins to operate, and then call it a day.

Not only, therefore, is the tax a definite deterrent to output (even if we assume only a 2 percent absenteeism figure to result from it, that is equivalent to nearly twice the amount of coal which the whole summer heating prohibition is supposed to save) but it largely makes nonsense of any wage or bonus increases, for if a bonus were paid on increased output it would, thanks to the tax, have to be nearly double as large as we wanted the man to receive. In that case, what would happen if, as some of us fondly hope, taxation were reduced?

This no doubt explains why Arthur Horner, the miners' leader, is making a virtue of necessity and putting forward demands that astonish one by their reasonableness. He is at the moment, at any rate, reported to be working for a 7 pound per week minimum for his miners, which is a quite inordinately modest claim when all the circumstances are taken into account, and far less than the great majority of the public would be ready to have the miners paid if they will only get the coal. But while the tax operates the way it does, there isn't any point in asking for very much more.

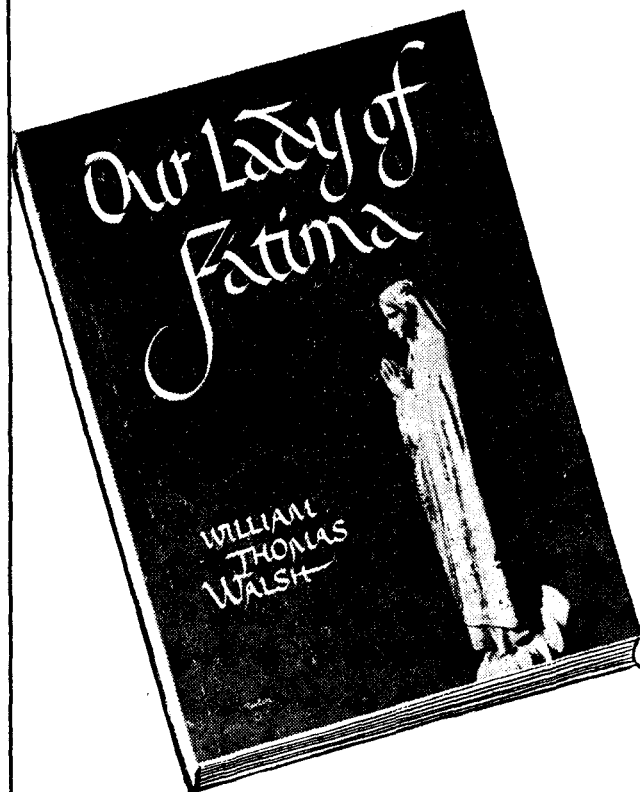
Quite obviously the present rate of tax is distorting the whole system of incentive and is making it impossible to give any kind of special reward for work which the nation is crying out to have performed, and the obvious solution is to give certain workers preferential tax relief.

Unfortunately, though pretty well everybody knows that this is the right solution, it cannot be applied. It cannot be applied because, as Trade Union officials have openly admitted to me, the Trade Unions have set their faces against it. Such a move would militate against the "solidarity of labor," and so mingled motives of jealousy, suspicion and the persistence of the exploitation complex are blocking a measure which would not only make a perceptible contribution to output but would certainly speed the coal industry's much needed recruitment. That is what I mean by a moral crisis.

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by William Thomas Walsh

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It is, of course, perfectly true that certain other industries are nearly as vital and in some cases nearly as hazardous as coal mining, and that if the principle of preferential tax relief were introduced, certain other industries would have to participate on a sliding scale. But that does not say that common sense could nowhere draw a line if the principle of preferential relief were accepted. The point is that the principle is repudiated. It acts, so far as organized labor is concerned, like a red rag to a bull.

Now, there are some who say that this unfortunate psychological state is our just punishment for the raw deal which over so long a period we gave to labor. I must say that I do not quite get this. Certainly many things might have been done, in what I suppose must be called the bad old days, by a more imaginative economic policy, and there is some substance to a charge of lethargy. But there was little positive bad will, and it seems a funny sort of justice that would punish a whole nation because its leaders were somewhat conservative in their fiscal expedients—particularly since the possessing classes, who, I suppose, are in a special measure to blame, are just the gentry who will be most immune. We may see a lot of changes yet in Britain, but I doubt whether we shall see steel barons and ex-coal magnates selling matches at the street corner. It will be the little fellows who will feel it, when the crash comes.

In any case, this question still remains: which is the most culpable, the man who inflicts an injury, or the man who is incapable of forgetting it? Whatever may be the answer, I am quite certain about which of the two will pay the ultimate penalty for it.

Communications

THE HERO

Take two physicists, two equally excellent physicists. Both of them, both on the same day, discover the secret of the atom bomb. But one of them refuses to exploit the secret, burns all his calculations, and quietly goes off to play pool, while the second seizes the opportunity for fame and becomes a national hero—recently you published his picture. Please note that the first man remains unknown, but he remains unknown for the precise reason that makes him a true hero. May I add that it is probably he who has best played his part in society.

DENIS DE ROUGEMONT, *The Commonweal*, May 16.

TO the Editors: No. Absolutely not. That kind of reasoning is wishful thinking. The problem of the atomic bomb does not lie in destroying man's thought and research, but in placing them in their true relationship to man's destiny.

Possibly a reading of Rougemont's book on the subject, "The Last Trump," would disclose that very attitude. But the article does not. Therefore I prefer Teilhard

de Chardin's view on the subject in *Études* September, 1946:

The day after the experiment in Arizona, some ventured to affirm that, at the end of their research, the physicists should have smothered and destroyed the dangerous fruit born of their creative spirit. As if the duty of any man was not, finally, to push to the end his creative power of knowledge and action! As if, any way, any power in the world was able to stop human thinking along any line it chose to exert itself.

And he concludes this learned, vigorous and timely article by the following words:

In the last analysis, the last effect of the light shed by atomic fire on the psychic depths of the earth, is to cause to rise the ultimate and culminating question of the termination of evolution, that is to say, the problem of God.

Here we are, a long way off from the sentimental if well-meaning "hero" of Denis de Rougemont's article.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

FOOD PARCELS

BECAUSE of the continuing European food crisis, we include the following names and addresses where CARE packages may be sent (\$10 each, CARE, 50 Broad Street, New York 4, N. Y.).

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France

Mrs. Rud. Kamir
Apostely 23
Vienna 40, Austria

Familie Erich Borsutzki
Hermann Lönsweg
Hamburg-Haselheide
Germany

Familie Matthias Köhler
Travelmannstr. 7
Lübeck, Germany

Carmel de St. Joseph
12 Via Innocenzo X
Rome, Italy

Since CARE packages are being held up by the authorities in Hungary, we suggest that Stumpp and Walter of 138 Church Street, New York 8, N. Y. (\$9.40, \$22.95, etc.) may be utilized for the following needy persons and institutions:

Sister Alexandra
(Young Mothers Club)
I. Krisztina krt. 125
Budapest, Hungary

Ottokar Arvaház
Pomáz, Pest m.
Hungary

Social Mission Motherhouse
I. Krisztina krt. 125
Budapest, Hungary

The Stage & Screen

Respectfully Yours

IT WOULD seem to me that the Blackfriars are providing one of the most agreeable evenings of the present spring and I can see no reason for anyone not (literally) rushing to take advantage of it. Quite simply, Peggy Lamson's comedy is gay and plain, admirably set by David Reppa, and well played. At one time, I think, seriously considered as a vehicle for Dorothy Gish, the business does have a "Life With Father" tone, detailing, as it does, an analogous American household in that more spacious era prior to World War I. The setting is Cambridge, Mass., this time. The protagonists, a young English Professor at Harvard, who is cumulatively growing pompous; his vague and endearing wife, who has written a feminist best-seller in her spare moments; and their single small offspring, whose chief delight is in playing the pianola with the loud lever pushed all the way over. How the aforementioned book strikes the family and the academic town is the play, and I should say Miss Lamson's only slight slip will be the motivation she has designed for an ulterior Professor, an Anthropologist, whose final doings do seem to descend the thing into farce. However, this looked like a matter of ten minutes fixing on the part of the author. There is no fixing required from the company, or their designer, or from Marjorie Hildreth, their director. It seemed astonishing to me that Anne Follmann, in the lead, could look so much like Miss Gish and yet sound so much like Helen Hayes. The combination is intriguing. Clifford West's Professor was excellent; Owen Dickson's Dean, Doris Sward's serious "modern" Girl, and small Kevin McCloskey's small Boy were in line. This is a credit all round. (*At the Blackfriars' Guild.*) KAPPO PHELAN.

Christmas in June

EVERY NOW and then the weary movie critic gets a pleasant surprise that puts a kick into his job. Such a spark was set off by "*Miracle on 34th Street*," a picture that should please the severest critic as well as the most blasé moviegoer. George Seaton, who knows his business, directed his own script, aimed straight at adults and hit his mark. "*Miracle*" could or could not be a fantasy. You can look at it any way you want to, because it never really denies or affirms that the nice old, white-bearded gent (expertly portrayed by Edmund Gwenn) actually is Santa Claus. But through a series of utterly delightful episodes, the picture manages to prove to practically everyone connected with the plot that Mr. Kringle, the Santa at Macy's during this particular Christmas season, is the real thing. John Payne, as a lawyer, proves it to a dubious judge (Gene Lockhart) and the New York Court. And Kringle himself proves it to Mr. Macy (Harry Antrim), and to his unhappy and skeptical publicity woman (Maureen O'Hara) and to her unhappy and sophisticated daughter (Natalie Wood

as a youngster wise beyond her years because she's in the second grade of a progressive school) and to a lot of other people nicely characterized by Seaton's well-directed supporting cast. William Perlberg has given "*Miracle*" an excellent production that includes everything from shots of Macy's Thanksgiving parade and other free advertising for this famous store, to well aimed cracks about Christmas commercialism in this modern prosaic world of ours. Children aren't going to be impressed with all this adult satire, but grown-ups will revel in its good natured humor, in Mr. Gwenn's acting and in such episodes as the competition between Mr. Macy and Mr. Gimbel to capture the true spirit of Santa.

The rest of this week's bill concerns itself mainly with troubled situations in which some of our leading actresses find themselves. In "*The Guilt of Janet Ames*," Rosalind Russell plays a woman who sets out to call on the five men who were saved by her husband's death during the war. She is on the verge of a breakdown; and under the guidance of one of these men, an alcoholic reporter played by Melvyn Douglas, she dreams up sequences that reveal details in the lives of the other four. These imaginative flashbacks indicate that these men were indeed worth saving, in fact more worthy than Janet's husband who died with all his dreams frustrated. And that is Janet's guilt. Although this film lacks the flashiness of "*Lady in the Dark*," I found its material more serious and interesting. Henry Levin's direction is rather static and talky; but the picture deserves credit for trying something different—even if this difference is likely to annoy psychiatrists who resent the movies' interference in their business.

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The psychiatrist (Morris Carnovsky) in "*Dishonored Lady*" finally convinces his very beautiful patient (Hedy Lamarr) that her life is not gay and glamorous but just muddled. So she stops acting like a nymphomaniac in New York's fashionable circles and moves down to Greenwich Village where she becomes a respectable artist and falls in love with a doctor (Dennis O'Keefe). Of course her past catches up with her one night, and later she is accused of murdering the detestable cad (John Loder). You won't exactly believe any of the episodes you see in this melodrama, but neither will you find it dull—unless you're bored by chichi sets and Miss Lamarr wearing a series of million-dollar creations.

In "*Honeymoon*," Shirley Temple plays a nit-wit from Minnesota who comes down to Mexico City to marry a corporal (Guy Madison) from the Canal Zone. When the couple do finally meet, after many mishaps, they have an awful time getting married; and they'd probably still be wandering around aimlessly and uttering cute bits of American slang if it weren't for Franchot Tone who helps them again and again—mainly because Shirley gets into Franchot's and his fiancée's hair. No doubt you could write a much better plot than this yourself, and even then you wouldn't have the nerve to ask a clever actress like Shirley to be in anything so inane.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement Good Out of Evil

THE LEAD story of the ACTU paper, *The Labor Leader*, for May 16 ran the head-line: "AFL and CIO Agree to Form One Organization." The man who wrote this head says he based it on the joint statement adopted by the ten leaders of the AFL and CIO who met in Washington on May 1-2. He took the naïve, childlike attitude that the statement meant what it said.

Others, older and wiser in the labor movement, said that the two organizations were as far apart as ever, that the chances of unity were just about zero, that the statement was so much pretty finery to distract the public from an ugly fact. The headline writer began to have doubts.

Then William Green, AFL president, made a speech at a union convention in Cincinnati and the New York *Times* reported it as follows: "Mr. Green, expressing great enthusiasm for the proposal that the AFL and the CIO close ranks, said he felt that, by early in 1948, such matters as overlapping jurisdiction between rival unions would be settled and the groundwork laid for an early consummation of the merger."

In direct quotes Brother Green said: "I have found from reports filed with us in Washington that the rank-and-file sentiment is growing in favor of the merger, and you can generally count upon the rank-and-file having its way."

So the head-line writer took heart. Maybe the joint statement really did mean what it said. Which was this:

It is the unanimous opinion of the representatives of the CIO and the AFL that organic unity should be established within the American labor movement. We are firmly convinced that the economic, social and industrial interests of labor can be best served through the establishment of a

united labor movement. This decision is based upon the modern trend of economic, social and industrial life. It now becomes our duty to lay a sound foundation upon which a super-structure of organic unity can be erected.

In order to accomplish this purpose we will now proceed to deal with the details incidental to the formation and establishment of a strong united labor movement in the US.

We will deal with this and other mutual problems at future meetings of the representatives of the two organizations herein named. We shall devote our energies and purpose toward the realization of this common objective.

In the meantime, we shall continue our efforts to prevent the enactment of highly objectionable anti-labor legislation now being considered in the Congress of the US.

It does seem pretty clear, doesn't it? And on the whole, pretty determined. It is true that after two days of negotiations the two committees were, or at least seemed to be, still deadlocked on a number of questions. But then, it is also possible that a lot of this was like a union asking for 30 cents when it would gladly settle for 15.

After all, this is the first time many of these labor leaders have spoken to each other in years and years. Phil Murray, CIO president, shook hands with John L. Lewis and said, "How are you, John?" And this was the first time they had spoken since about 1941, when Lewis, now back in the AFL, had banished his former lieutenant into exterior darkness because the latter wouldn't be his stooge in the presidency of the CIO. Lewis then ousted Murray as vice-president of the miners. The gentle Philip showed that he had not forgotten.

As they were sitting around, posing for pictures, the nervous, agreeable Dan Tobin (AFL teamsters) tried to ease the tension by remarking that he was surrounded by miners: Lewis, Murray and Green. Then smiling at Murray he said, "I forgot, Phil, you're not a miner now—you're in steel—a puddler, they call it." Murray, smiling back and looking at Lewis, said, "No, I'm a miner. I was kicked out."

Tobin, still trying, said, "We might get you back. We got Bill Green back, and he was kicked out worse than you." But the effort was wasted on Lewis. He just stared off into space. They say that for all of the first day he was very quiet. On the second day, however, he presented the AFL proposal, which was short: all CIO unions to return to the AFL as they were, with full voting privileges at the next AFL convention in October. The joint committee was to adjust details, and final decisions on disputed points would apparently be left to the convention.

Although this was a considerable improvement over the last AFL offer, presented in the negotiations of 1941-'43, the CIO shied away because it did not give more specific guarantees that CIO unions would not be cut up by the AFL's craft unions. This is a reasonable objection. It would probably be enough if the AFL leaders would agree only to *recommend* that the principle of industrial unionism should be protected in any mergers between individual AFL and CIO unions. The five men who make up the AFL committee—Green, Lewis, Tobin, Bill Hutcheson (carpenters) and George Meany, secretary-treasurer—swing more than enough votes to guarantee passage in any joint AFL-CIO convention.

As a matter of fact, it might be a good idea to look twice at the assumption that seems to inspire the CIO's

uneasiness, namely, that the AFL leaders can control such a convention all by themselves. True enough, AFL membership is now about 7,500,000. And CIO membership is only 6,000,000, and maybe even a little less than that. Nevertheless, there are a number of unions in the AFL that could be counted on to provide votes for any reasonable proposition presented by the CIO. The CIO unions would be solid. Therefore it would seem that it is really the AFL leaders who would have more to fear from a joint convention in any showdown vote on "a reasonable proposition."

The future of AFL-CIO unity depends somewhat on the future of the Taft-Hartley Bill. If the President signs it, which God forbid, if the President vetoes it and Congress over-rides, then the impetus toward labor unity is going to be tremendous. They say that God can bring good out of evil. Let us all pray that the evil won't be necessary.

JOHN C. CORT.

Sinclair Lewis

VINCENT SHEEAN

SINCLAIR LEWIS has at last turned the full ferocity of his genius upon the chief problem peculiar to American society. That is, of course, the problem of the relationship between a jealous, vindictive, predatory and unjust racial majority of "whites" or near-whites and an almost helpless minority of "blacks" or near-blacks. The result is a novel* of such extraordinary vigor and humanity that one is inclined to put it among the major works of this great writer, along with those two or three books that first commanded the attention of the world some twenty-five years ago.

The fortunes of Mr. Lewis in the development of the themes that interest him have been varied. He has not always been able to carry us along with him in the *élan* which is essential to his kind of writing. Perhaps it is because at times he has himself been unable to experience that *élan* with the old fire and fury. All writers and consequently all writing are the victims of biochemistry, and one who burns himself up so recklessly as Mr. Lewis must be even more at the mercy of physical nature. Whatever the reason, it is certain that not since "It Can't Happen Here" (1935) has Mr. Lewis taken us on such an irresistible headlong rush through an imagined experience; not since "Arrowsmith" (1925) has he been able to give us such passionate sympathy with his characters; and not since "Babbitt" (1922) has he so humanely understood, and, for all his savagery, so felt and evoked the emotion of pity for the mortals trapped in an inimical society.

The qualities of Lewis at his best are the qualities of a very great writer. This has always been imperfectly understood in the United States, where great writers are expected to be either foreign or dead, and where, owing to the restriction of serious interest in literature to cliques and coteries, a certain exoticism of taste among the lettered has imposed its ill-comprehended criteria upon a much larger public. Among those who were reading Proust the day before yesterday and Kafka this morning how many, alas! were doing so listlessly and without participation, upon the mere word of a pundit momentarily

in favor. This century has been blessed with many great writers: one has only to think of Gorky, Valéry, Proust, Joyce and Kafka, more or less at random—and there are at least eight or ten more—to see that the period has been fecund. The work of Lewis is so violently American that it bears no resemblance whatever to that of such deliberate and lapidary European artists, preoccupied as they were with form. His appeal is to the largest public he can possibly reach, and to do so he uses the most widely established vernacular; he composes on a huge scale, with great, heavy lines, extreme foreshortenings and distortions of perspective; he is thus thought, as it says in the article on him in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, to exhibit a "lack of art"; in reality, it seems to me, he has an art which is altogether his own. Its vital power is shown in two phenomena characteristic of the giants: first, it is so personal that it bears his stamp in every part and thus defies imitation or rivalry; second, it transcends language itself and is felt with equal intensity in all parts of the world through the veils of translation.

This is not to say, by any means, that Lewis has all the qualities that belong to his greatness. The design was grandiose but it was not altogether filled in. His passion for justice and his comprehension of humanity may make us think of Goethe or Tolstoy, but the actual ectoplasm is not of their texture. In all its astonishing vigor and pungency, his prose is likely at times to weary the palate by its narrowness of range. It never sings; it cannot be made thicker or thinner, sweeter or harsher, at will; its pace or tempo, musically speaking, varies little. This is the principal limitation of a talent which otherwise towers above all others, I believe, in mature and serious novel-writing in the United States.

And yet for the themes that interest him and for the kind of composition in which he is a master, Lewis has the instruments he most needs. There is a kind of sardonic bitterness in his style, achieved mainly by incongruous juxtapositions (as in the first paragraph of page 281 in "Kingsblood Royal," which reminds one of the most inspired inventions of Charlie Chaplin; there is a breathless speed in climaxes which makes me think of Toscanini; there are passages of dialogue, as in some of the conversations between white men about Negroes in this book, which cut with the sharp edge of horror. Technically speaking, none of these effects would be at all easy for another writer; they are part of the peculiar treasure which is his. We have, of course, seen them before in his work, but the subject itself calls them forth more naturally in this novel than ever before.

The subject, as most of the reading public will have heard by now, is the drama of a conventional young American banker, red-haired and "Nordic," who discovers that on one side he is descended from the marriage of a Negro and a Chippewa Indian. The action unfolds on two planes: that of the young man's conscience and that of his social relationships. Mr. Lewis, with the bold and positive draftsmanship characteristic of him, does not hesitate to foreshorten where he chooses, and the hero, Neil Kingsblood, is plunged within a day or so into a dilemma that in life might have taken years to realize. His progress from the "white" to the "black" world, with the demands it makes upon his wife and everybody else concerned, is hastened by the stupid cruelty of his former friends and neighbors, who in the end are seen driving him with violence from the very house he lives

*Kingsblood Royal. Sinclair Lewis. Random. \$3.00.

in. The wife, Vestal, one of the most perfectly realized women characters in the whole work of Lewis, declares herself to be a Negro in the end because she wishes to share whatever may be his fate.

Throughout the development of this theme there is a sense of the inevitable, as there was in "Babbitt," in which society itself plays the part assigned to impersonal fate in the Greek tragedies. The dramatic structure is so strong and clear, with its well-defined climaxes, that some indebtedness to the theatre may be surmised; but if there is theatre in it, it is the theater of Ibsen, not of Broadway. Never has Mr. Lewis been more absolute master of his material; his very fury itself, which is an essential part of that material, is always superbly controlled, so that we believe the action from beginning to end and are swept away by it. There are innumerable dangers in the theme, amongst which sentimentality and melodrama are two, but it seems to me that the author has kept a cool head and a firm hand through it all, brilliantly accomplishing one of the most difficult tasks an American writer can face.

And if he had not faced this task his work would have been notably incomplete. Given all the conditions, it was his duty to the world to deal with a subject which is at the heart of our society and our philosophical confusion. It is not the duty of all writers, but it is the duty of Sinclair Lewis, because he is big enough to dare it and do it. We may be grateful indeed, not only that he has written this book, but that he has done so with a resumption of his full power and passion. Thus we can be sure that it will be read everywhere and in times unborn, so that the Eskimo and the Hottentot will know that there was a conscience in this country in an hour of darkness. There may even be some effect upon American society, for it has been Lewis's destiny (as it was Dickens's) to bring about change in the material he describes. Whether this occurs or not, "Kingsblood Royal" blazes with the life-giving power, the Promethean flame, and nobody who really reads it will ever be quite the same again.

The Infernal Music Hall

JOHN BRODERICK

IN HIS PERORATION to the history of the German Underground* as he knew it (from the OSS in Switzerland looking in), Mr. Dulles touches lightly on the one thing about the home opposition to Hitler that cannot be got round—the fact that, after all the secret meetings, the dangerous journeys, the manifestoes and proved heroism, it never came to very much. It didn't, Mr. Dulles admits, but the effort was worth something, even though nearly all the Germans who ever dreamed aloud of getting rid of Hitler are now dead. Besides, Mr. Dulles continues, it wasn't easy; who, anywhere, would have done better than Goerdeler, Stauffenberg, and Beck?

Mr. Dulles is right on both counts. A legend of splendid human failure and waste is worth something to a nation, although in this case, because of the quality of human stuff that the war has left over in Germany, it may be some time before German schoolboys bend proudly

over that clandestine passage of their history which came to an end on July 20, 1944, when Count Claus von Stauffenberg placed the bomb that should have killed Hitler. And the only thing wrong with Beck and the others was the same thing that was wrong with everyone else between 1932 and 1938: they waited too long. And the delay was fatal. The question to ask next is why?

Mr. Dulles gives the approved political history answer to that one: when the leaders of a police state have had six years in which to get under way, six years in which to breed and mature a Himmler and his system, why, by that time, the job of getting rid of the jailers is exceedingly complex. Much more difficult, for example, than taking to the woods and hills for the simple exhilarating purpose of blowing up trains and bridges. Well, that *almost* answers the question, but there are other inquiries one might make about the failure of the German Underground. After all, the one obvious thing the Germans knew they had to do in order to break the Nazi grip was to arrest or assassinate Hitler. The record shows that they tried. But why did they miss so often? Was his system of protection really so very efficient? The plotters were always near enough, so why did they consistently fail to box the queen bee? The answer to that unhappy mystery comes out piecemeal, bit by bit, as one reads the story of the German Underground, from the inside—as told by Fabian von Schlabrendorff,* one of the very few Underground survivors, and from the outside—as reported by Mr. Dulles, for the USA.

From 1932 until 1938, those Germans who disliked or suspected Hitler waited for the moment when he would make such a total and obvious ass of himself that the sensible German nation would rise to hoot and cat-call him back into the obscurity from which he came. Hitler did just what his opponents expected him to do, of course—many times. But they had overrated the political sensitivity, or the political courage of the German nation; the noisy, emphatic repudiation that they had anticipated never came about, and when the anti-Hitler Germans realized finally—by 1938—that the mass rejection of Hitler wasn't going to happen, that the Nazi siege could be lifted only by action of the intense, dedicated few—then it was several years too late. Not because of the Gestapo efficiency (the Gestapo wasn't so very efficient, actually), and not because Hitler had confused and torn up the bases of his most prominent opposition—the churches and the trade unions. During those six years of grace Hitler had done something else to Germany. He had spread into the air of the Fatherland the peculiar odor of his own spirit, that cross between the obscene and the hilarious which was most apparent in the shocking person of his henchman, Hermann Goering. By 1938 Hitler had converted Germany into a vast infernal music hall, and from that year on both men and events in the Fatherland were tinged with a quality that was frightening, ludicrous, and faintly off-center. The very atmosphere had become distorted. Direct, successful action, without fumbles, was no longer possible.

The Germans who plotted against Hitler were caught up in that atmosphere, and the chronicle of their efforts to do away with him reads like a wild cosmic farce, ending in a furious burst of flames and laughter which consumed the stage, the mimes, and the audience. There

*Germany's Underground. Allen Welsh Dulles. Macmillan. \$3.00.

*They Almost Killed Hitler. Edited by Zero v. S. Gaevernitz. Macmillan. \$2.50.

were times when bombs that always went off did not go off; instances of Hitler's escape because an appointment was changed or a meeting canceled; and finally, the last absurd miscarriage on July 20, 1944, when Hitler came off alive because someone had caused a briefing to be held in a wooden building that would not contain a bomb blast and because Hitler, at the last minute, moved a few feet away from the hidden bomb that would certainly have got him.

There was even something insane, wrenched and hysterically funny about some of the chief plotters: Admiral Canaris, head of the *Abwehr* (Intelligence), whose ancestors were Greeks and who aided the plot partly because of a weary dislike of all politics and power, but mainly because his remaining interest in life was intrigue for its own sake; the madly courageous, faintly mystic Catholic aristocrat who was elected to place the July 20 bomb—Count Claus von Stauffenberg, who had been wounded in Africa and had only one arm and one eye; Colonel General Ludwig Beck, a professional army officer who preferred the company of intellectuals, and who, on being told that the July 20 plot was a failure and that he would be permitted to commit suicide, raised a pistol to his head, murmured "I recall the old times at this moment . . .," pulled the trigger, and missed. And the nazis themselves added one of the final touches of madness and comedy. During the series of mock "peoples trials" that was held in the wake of the general unmasking which followed July 20, the defendants—particularly if they had been important figures in the plot—were frequently herded into court dressed in the oldest, most ill-fitting civilian wear that the nazi prosecutors had been able to find. Often, when a defendant, in a moment of forgetfulness and passion, was lashing out at Hitler and the nazis, his over-large trousers would fall to the floor. In such a moment the atmosphere of Hitler's Germany, the imprint of his being was complete: obscenity and the devil's rare mirth were played off against a background that shammed one of the most noble symbols of Western civilization—the court of law.

In most ways, the Dulles account of the German Underground is more complete and interesting than the rather tired story told by Von Schlabrendorff. There is one thing about the Von Schlabrendorff book, however, that is particularly arresting. At the bottom of at least one-quarter of the pages in that 150-page book there are footnotes. Sometimes there is only one; often there are as many as three. They complete the life story of members of the German Underground about whom Von Schlabrendorff has had something to say higher up on the page, and they nearly always contain the same information: (a) the man committed suicide shortly after the failure of the July 20 plot; (b) he was captured by the Gestapo and shot; (c) he was hanged. Frequently there is a note added to (b) or (c) which mentions that the man was also tortured.

Von Schlabrendorff's footnotes, when read individually, do not seem to explain anything that is not already known about the risk and waste of war. It is only when they are totaled that one realizes what they mean. Von Schlabrendorff's particular list of dead includes the names of nearly all the Germans who could have been counted on, were they alive today, to aid in the task of digging the German nation out of the nazi rubble. But they aren't around now. Instead, only those who never risked anything are still on hand—the world's most enduring class,

ready now, after a long timid wait in the shadowed porticoes, to come out for their usual fling on history's bright, clear days.

In 1945, when it was all over, Mr. Dulles moved into Germany to help out the AMG and to complete his knowledge of the German Underground. One of the things that he was most keen to find was the fabled secret diary that had been kept by Admiral Canaris. He did not find the diary (he is convinced that it was found and destroyed by the nazis during the last weeks of the war), but he learned nearly everything else that he wanted to know about his deceased correspondents—more details about who they were and where they came from and why, in each case, they had been in on the plot to kill Hitler and overthrow the nazis.

Like the people in all the Undergrounds which formed below the surface of the second World War, members of the German Underground came from all over. The acting force was supplied, as it had to be, by the army officers who grouped around Beck. The social planning for the good days that were to follow when Hitler was gone was mainly inspired by Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, a former mayor of Leipzig. The intellectualizing (much of it suspiciously like that strange half-West, half-*wald* metaphysical *borscht* that seems to be so necessary to the Germans), was provided by a group known as the Kreisau Circle. Most of the communists and trade unionists came in late, but they were still in plenty of time for the slaughter that followed the debacle of July 20.

In a parting note of advice to his own government, Mr. Dulles suggests that everyone take a long look at the plan for Germany that the plotters never had a chance to use. He thinks that those who study it will learn a good deal about the kind of democratic admixture that the Germans, at this moment in their history, are capable of taking. Mr. Dulles also thinks that the history of the German Underground might have turned out much differently if the Western powers had not insisted—against the advice he sent in his dispatches from Berne—on unconditional surrender. It might have. But he must know that things always look differently from headquarters. Mr. Dulles was being paid to handle a battalion front in Switzerland and it is to his credit that, even now, his sector loyalty is so strong.

More Books of the Week

The Abolition of Man. C. S. Lewis. Macmillan. \$1.25.

RECENTLY a Cairo professor and his wife took their only son, aged four, into the Egyptian desert for a picnic. While they were unpacking the lunch, the child ran up to them with something in his hand. "I should throw that away, darling," said his mother, and, since she did not know it was a hand grenade, saw him blown up before her eyes. Human society today is trotting as guilelessly up to its mentors, according to Mr. C. S. Lewis, and he is quite certain that what these advise it to throw down will no less surely blow it up. In these three lectures, given at the University of Durham, he attacks educationalists for denying "that there is something to agree or disagree about." Deceptively simple—he subtitles his remarks "reflections on English, with special reference to the teaching of English in the upper forms of schools"—these essays restate Aristotle's claim that the object of education is to make the pupil

like and dislike what he ought. Mr. Lewis's serious title is no overstatement; what is involved in the triumph of pragmatism is quite simply the abolition of man. Humanity, if it is to survive, dare not jettison objective reality, for if it leave the Way, then there is no alternative but extinction. This Way, the Tao of the Chinese, the Rta of early Hinduism, the *ordo amoris*, of Augustine, is "the reality beyond all predicates, the Way in which the universe goes on, the Way in which things everlastingly emerge, stilly and tranquilly into space and time. It is also the Way which every man should tread in imitation of that cosmic and supercosmic progression, conforming all activities to that great exemplar." And if man will not so conform, "If the Sun and Moon should doubt they'd immediately go out" as Blake warned them and us. You can debunk up to a certain point only, Mr. Lewis says: "virtue has become integration, diligence dynamism, the virtues of thrift and temperance, and even of ordinary intelligence, are sales resistance." But when it comes to seeing through first principles, there comes a point when there is nothing left to see, for "a wholly transparent world is an invisible world. To see through all things is the same as not to see." And to be outside the pattern to which stars and sentiments both conform is, quite simply, not to be.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

Dust on the King's Highway. Helen C. White. Macmillan. \$3.50.

ANYONE WHO KNOWS the novels of Helen C. White is aware of her painstaking work in establishing an exact, detailed historical mood. Indeed, a minor criticism of her fiction is that one sometimes gets lost in a maze of historicity, and the process of flipping back several pages to re-orient oneself is not uncommon. But in all her major novels, there is a great purity of writing, and there is always exciting characterization. There are no phony situations, no half-done people, no nonsense. In "Dust on the King's Highway," Miss White once more demonstrates her major importance as a writer of serious fiction, and as a recorder of the influence of missionary activity in the development of a civilization.

This is the story of the Franciscan friars who pioneered with, even before, the Spanish explorers and colonizers of our southwest. Father Francisco Garces is the central figure, and his relations with the fervent Indian chief, Palma, the sensible Spanish Captain Anza, his own fellow monks, and the not-so-sensible other Spanish officers and administrators form the core of a story which has as its general background the sweeping panorama of our southwestern plains, valleys, and mountains, peopled by many Indian tribes. Father Garces attempts to establish the faith, and to aid the colonization, always with the ideal of respecting the feelings and customs of his Indians while bringing them under the Cross of Christ and the scepter of Spain. He succeeds to a point—indeed his success is crowned by martyrdom—but he fails in his great effort, not through any great deficiency in himself or his fellow missionaries, but through the inability of the organizers, the soldiery, and the colonizers to recognize the Indians as their brethren, and their consequent inability to sustain a common mode of life without exploiting the peoples with whom they live. The Indians' distrust finally flames into massacre.

Miss White's art is powerful. Her scenes are over-

whelming in their brilliant detail. Her understanding of the mind of this missionary, for example, matches anything this reviewer has seen in spiritual appraisal. Her dialogue is wonderfully natural, and when she chooses to plunge into the fiery furnace of physical and emotional violence, she is capable of stunning the reader with page after page of pure excitement. The whole novel is worked out with a steady surety and in a firm pattern. Even though the Indian peoples sometimes merge one into another, and though the countryside becomes alternately familiar and strange, the whole story is strong, clear, and pointed. If any single part of the book can be pointed out as being really tumultuous reading, it must be the section dealing with the apparent disappointment of Father Garces and his confrère, Father Barreneche, in escaping the slaughter that had befallen their settlement, and then with the ultimate arrival and acceptance of their martyrdom. That section at the end of the book is powerful writing.

T. E. CASSIDY.

Into the Main Stream. Charles S. Johnson. North Carolina. \$3.50.

DR. Charles S. Johnson, president of Fisk University, has co-ordinated the reports of seven hundred local observers from different sections of the South into a thorough survey of the "better practices" of race relations. With more restraint than is generally shown by those writing on this problem, he confines himself to positive advances. From the varied reports he concludes that "Negroes in the South have shown that they can work constructively on many levels of cooperation without insisting first upon the total abandonment by their white collaborators of all the symbols which they revere"—segregation and anti-miscegenation. In turn the reports show that while in practice the whites allow equalization slowly, there is a growing recognition of the principle of equalization. "Into the Main Stream" is an encyclopedia of facts covering what has been done, up to 1945, to improve race relations in the fields of citizenship, politics, employment, education, housing, health, religion and youth.

Surprisingly, the result is not a set of dead statistical material, rather, one receives both a comprehensive and illuminating picture of race relations, free from criticism and bitterness. The technique of confining the text to progressive developments, however, does not prevent the reader from wondering that if this is progress, what is average reality. To take some extreme examples: the evidence in rural Tennessee that conditions are improving includes the item that "the Negro worker and a white worker went together in the former's car" when acting as registrars for war-ration books. The *Durham Herald* is singled out because in a news-story "The titles 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' were used for the Negro social workers and agency officers, as for the whites." In surveying the contributions of colleges to solving the race problem Louisiana State University is commended because it now has two courses: "Race Relations, with eighteen students and a seminar in Race Relations with seventeen. A Master's thesis has been written in the field."

The majority of the items are, happily, more significant. There is information about the more than two hundred committees, with both white and Negro members, which have been formed throughout the South to deal with race problems. Reports on equalization of teachers' and other

occupational salaries are encouraging. The facts about the activities of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the FSA and Extension Division show definite advancement in agriculture, where the status of the Negro has been most depressed. A hundred thousand of the million Southerners who have joined unions since 1935 are Negroes, and the CIO has frequently organized Negroes and Whites in the same union. All the churches have developed programs. The Catholic Church is given credit for its many activities to promote inter-racial justice and because it alone, of all religious denominations in the South, has many "mixed" congregations and "any Catholic, white or colored, may attend any Catholic church anywhere." All in all, "Into the Main Stream" is itself a good example of improved race relations.

EMERSON HYNES.

Modern Christian Revolutionaries. Ed. by Donald Attwater. Devin-Adair. \$4.00.

THIS BOOK is subtitled, "An Introduction to the lives and thought of: Kierkegaard, Eric Gill, G. K. Chesterton, C. F. Andrews, Berdyaev." Two Protestants, two Catholics, and a Russian Orthodox; a motley-seeming quintet, yet there is unity in the choice. It is a unity of objective, a oneness of purpose. Each subject was impatient of the static self-complacency of modern social thinking. Each saw the despair in a social philosophy which, professing to take the Larger View, ticketed man as the fortuitous victim (or alternatively, the darling) of an evolving Cosmos.

Kierkegaard, Gill, et al., are not interested particularly in the Cosmos. They are not even interested in man, in the abstract. They are interested in *this man*, in Me. Theirs is a philosophy that is subjective ("Existential" is the modern word), because it is only their own spirit that they really know, only their own thoughts, passions, emotions, and frustrations, which they can examine and from which they can draw conclusions. God, and Man (as represented by myself), and the interrelation of the two—these are the burden of their preoccupation.

Kierkegaard was a Danish layman who was regarded as a rebel by the divines of his own church. Yet his speculations have been the inspiration and are largely the basis of the modern Protestant theological revival. He and Berdyaev are the two pure theorists of the symposium. Chesterton and Gill, while speculative enough, are more practical in their approach to the problem of integrating man to his environment. Andrews, a missionary rather than a thinker, holds rather a dubious place in such company.

For the Catholic, this is a volume which is at once stimulating and humbling. Stimulating, in that it stirs channels of thought that the reader long had supposed fixed in permanent patterns. Humbling, in that it gives a healthful jolt to our self-sufficiency to find such depth and sincerity in men like Kierkegaard and Berdyaev, such apostolic fervor in a man like Andrews. There is an element of surprise, too, for the average reader, in the discovery that, even within the limits of Divine Revelation, there still is so much of truth that man but dimly sees, so much of implementation that still is fluid.

"Modern Christian Revolutionaries" originally appeared as five separate small volumes of a series being published in England. There is a notable variation in the style and method of the contributors. M. S. Channing-



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Pearce, for example, writes of Kierkegaard with a laboriousness and a carelessness for punctuation that adds to the difficulty of his longer sentences. There is heaviness, too, in Evgueny Lampert's exposition of Nicholas Berdyaev. F. A. Lea, Donald Attwater, and Nichol MacNichol, treating respectively of G. K. Chesterton, Eric Gill, and C. F. Andrews, have a happier facility of composition—possibly because they are confined less closely to the realm of the speculative. However, each author has brought to his own particular assignment a sincerity and a seriousness which give permanent value to the completed work. In passing, it is interesting to note the contrasts that can result from a difference in viewpoint; Lea, a non-Catholic, feels that Chesterton's genius was largely stultified when he became a Catholic; Attwater, himself a convert, is just as certain that Gill's full flowering came with his entrance into the Church.

This is not a bedside book, and it is not for lazy minds. Each of the five studies attempts to concentrate within seventy to eighty pages, a whole lifetime of thought. That calls for careful, thoughtful, reading—and re-reading. It will be reading well repaid.

LEO J. TRESE.

Paris Was Our Mistress. Samuel Putnam. Viking. \$3.00.

THERE was this man at lunch in the Grand Central Terminal in New York, with all the trains going out to the suburbs and the trains going up the Hudson to Albany, and then westward to all the points West, but he said I have a wife and children and I am sailing on the *Elizabeth* tomorrow and I am going to live in France, live there, not just travel in France, live there and stay there. That was not after the last war; that was after this war, that was this week.

And so they still are doing it; they still are going abroad; there is still this appeal of Europe for Americans. It is not even a Europe where it is comfortable to live, and it certainly is not an America in which it is uncomfortable to live—or an America in which it is impossible to write. It is a Europe which is not like the old Europe, and an America which is no longer like Babbitt's America, and all the reasons which impelled Americans to go abroad after the last war no longer can be used to explain why there is this one, if only this one American who wants to go abroad and live abroad, now, after this war.

He did not explain his reasons while he sat in Grand Central and allowed all the trains to go out of the station without his getting on them to visit America first. He said simply that he was going. He was not like Mr. Samuel Putnam whose book about the expatriates in Paris starts out with quite a sociological account of the causes for their expatriation. Mr. Putnam knows why he went to Paris and why he returned. The reasons for going include a bird's eye view of the state of letters in America in which there is an interesting recall of the founding of *Poetry* in Chicago, and of various Mid-Western characters and dissatisfactions; the reasons for returning include a rather wistful and childish account of Mr. Putnam's growing "social consciousness." With regard to Italian fascism for example, "it was the Hemingway episode which finally opened my eyes." This episode no doubt is somewhere in the book, but the book is so episodic that it is lost to me somewhere in the confusion, and I find myself not looking it up because, whatever it is, it can hardly have been as dramatic or eye-opening as the Matteotti "episode." Mr. Putnam admits that the left

bank Americans of his times were "asocial."

When Mr. Putnam finally becomes interested in social and political questions—in the last twelve pages of his book—and looks for a moment at what serious Frenchmen were doing, it is explainable but nevertheless annoying that he should not be very enlightening. "Unfortunately, the majority of these movements [the literary, artistic, youth and student movements in Europe] were extremely confused when not downright reactionary in character; and, now and then, as with the group about the French magazine *Esprit*, the reactionary content was masked by a radical and even pseudo-Marxist idiom." Such a misreading of *Esprit* is unpardonably uninformed.

Mr. Putnam is at his best when he remains "asocial" and chronicles the chit-chat of the Left Bank. It is pleasant to see Ezra Pound discussed as a poet, even if it is obvious that someone who awaited the "Hemingway episode" to find out about fascism could hardly, with any grace, discuss him as anything else—or politically. It is agreeable also that Mr. Putnam is not superior about Harold Stearns. But somehow when any artist of some importance is discussed, in brief paragraphs, or in what appears to be rewritten newspaper interviews, he is at once reduced to his simpler and more superficial aspects. Aragon, Cocteau, Picasso, Stein, Pirandello and Chagall appear for a moment and then, like the marionettes, are gone. Whereas the minor characters, the Americans at the café terraces, remain and remain and remain—always considered with the utmost seriousness, always explained, evaluated and measured. There is a certain interest in having all these names brought back after the years; it is like looking at a college class album; but the captions under the little pictures are professorial and dull; perhaps, without immense talent, it is impossible to recapture the past.

There is one little caption under the portrait Chagall which must be corrected. Mr. Putnam hardly gets under way when on page 4 he says: "Marc Chagall, having made his peace with the Soviets, after a brief exile in America goes back to his native Russia." In a book of nostalgia anything goes, but this great artist fortunately lives and works in America. C. G. PAULDING.

Seizure of Territory. Robert Langer. Princeton. \$3.50.

ALTHOUGH it carries all the marks of a doctor's thesis, this examination of the Stimson Doctrine, which overrates the value of "non-recognition" as a weapon in diplomacy, is a valuable survey. It digs out a lot of interesting facts about the diplomatic double-crosses during the last two decades. In particular, those who insist on whitewashing Soviet Russia's motives in this cut-throat game should read the sections in this book which deal with the rewards presented to Russia's Slavic "brothers."

J. S. R.

Maura Laverty's Cookbook. Longmans. \$3.00.

THE IRISH novelist, author of "No More Than Human," writes amusing and modest prefaces to recipes for making the dishes the Irish eat, together with those discovered in her travels, in Spain notably. So you can have such a thing as "cornstarch flummery," or steamed Arran potatoes, or paella. It is a pretty book to look at, with stories and anecdotes, and it furnishes usefully a pattern of experimentation to Americans who, providentially, have all the needed ingredients—at the A&P, or frozen, or at the delicatessen—at hand.

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Next Week

Spanish Policy- Racism Within- Pius XII and Saint Benedict

SANCTIONS AGAINST FRANCO, by Emmet John Hughes, presents as persuasive an argument as has been advanced in this country for action aimed at dislodging General Franco. The core of it is that if present suppressions continue to exist—and the United States and other political democracies continue to refuse action—the Spanish people will finally, in utter desperation, throw their destinies into the hands of the USSR. Mr. Hughes, an American Catholic, author of "The Church and the Liberal Society," and now head of the *Life-Time* Bureau in Rome, spent the war years in Madrid. His authoritative volume, "Report from Spain," of which this article is a key part, is to be published by Henry Holt on June 16.

A NEGRO LOOKS AT THE CHURCH, by Alice Renard, comes from the Middle West. The author relates a well authenticated series of startling incidents which should provide a challenge to us all.

NEW LIGHT ON LABOR, by W. Michael Ducey, is a perceptive analysis of the recent encyclical commemorating the fourteenth centenary of the Rule of Saint Benedict and its application to the contemporary social scene.

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In the Days of My Youth. James P. G. Southall. University of North Carolina Press. \$3.00.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that this delightfully merry and unpretentious chronicle of student life at the University of Virginia should have been published at the University of North Carolina where, for many years, Dr. J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton has gathered for the Southern Historical Collection all manner of social documents. Dr. Southall has caught the spirit of the young people of good family who grew up in the period immediately following Reconstruction. Poor as poverty, Southern girls and boys depended on their own nonsense for amusement: badinage was their favorite pastime, their wits and tongues vied with one another in speed. In reporting their gaiety, the author, who was a student from 1888 to 1893, and is now Professor Emeritus of Physics at Columbia University, retains the light-hearted humor of the time, pausing only very occasionally to give his sound and interesting conclusions on academic courses, fraternities, college athletics and the effect that ignorance of the humanities has had on our political life.

The very essence of Charlottesville, or rather of the University (the only one in the world) is here. A hundred years from now, a novelist, seeking to depict the scene, will find in these pages, names and all, the belles who heard the students' lessons seated on a stile in the vicinity of the University Cemetery, who drove with them round the nine-mile circuit, flirted with them, discarded them, eventually married them and helped them to eminence in American life. Needless to say, the names of the men are also given, and certain lawyers, doctors and professors of renown may well rejoice that the publication of this memoir was somewhat delayed.

D. H. MOSELEY.

Tomorrow's Food. James Rorty and N. Philip Norman. Prentice. \$3.50.

THE AUTHORS discuss past, present and future nutrition, the relationship between natural foods and good health, the ill-effects of processed foods, including white bread and sugar, on our bodies and dispositions, the dangers of the use of synthetic vitamins, and what we may expect in the way of improved nutrition if the users and the peddlers allow the nutritionists to give our people a decent diet. Mr. Rorty and Doctor Norman think that the airplane, frozen foods and co-ops may help; they suggest that our coming food surpluses may well be given to the poor instead of being seasoned with gasoline and burned up. Much of what they say has been said elsewhere. Nevertheless, compilations of this kind are worth doing: they stimulate thought and may even provoke action.

DONALD POWELL.

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Thomas MERTON'S most recent volume of poetry was "A Man in the Divided Sea." He is a Trappist monk of Gethsemani, Ky.

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